

The Intelligencer.

Office: Nos. 25 and 27 Fourteenth Street.

Dr. J. T. Thompson, member elect from the Belmont Congressional District, gave us call yesterday on his way to Washington.

The Chicago elevators are full of grain, and notice has been served on shippers that no more can be received until some portion of the supply on hand is removed.

Mr. Mahon, editor of that excellent family paper, the Greenbrier Independent, is in the city. We presume that he will not feel at liberty to go near the Supreme Court room, after that terrible quotation from Marbury.

Gen. G. W. Brown and J. W. Mason, Esq., of Grafton, and George C. Sturgis, Esq., of Morgantown, were in the city yesterday on their way to Pittsburgh, to attend a meeting of the directors of the Pittsburgh, West Virginia & Southern Narrow Gauge Railroad Company. They all seem to be enthused over the prospect of building the road as far as Grafton at an early day. They report that Dr. Hays, the new President of the road, met with very encouraging success during his trip over the proposed route of the road between Grafton and New River.

A writer in yesterday's Register accounts for the lack of sufficient difference between gas bills in Dec. 1874 and Dec. 1878, by explaining that since the former date the gas mains have been so enlarged that they allow the pressure at the reservoir to exert its perfect work, with more freedom upon the burners, and hence there is greater volume of escape. It happens, however, according to our information, that the mains were enlarged prior to the date quoted by us, and that the gas was flowing through them at that time, just as the \$1.80 gas is now, and that for some reason the flow has seemed to increase inversely with the reduction in the price, and that the 60 per cent reduction has not brought economy and happiness to a number of consumers. It might be well to put up the price and reduce the pressure a little, and thus make the mains a little less laxative as it were.

A society has been incorporated in New York to be known as the Moderation Society, and its purpose is to enable business men to unite their energies in encouraging a moderate use of stimulants as opposed to excessive drinking or drunkenness. The rules of the society provide for taking the pledge, to continue during a single year or longer, and renewable at the end of the time specified, if thought to be desirable. Its members are to abstain from drinking during business hours, and, in general, various rules are laid down, the observance of which cannot but operate to repress drunkenness, and thus contribute to the temperance reform. Perhaps the most important feature of the society is the exaction of a promise from the members to discourage in every possible way the harmful habits of "treating." If it were possible to learn exactly how much intemperance comes from this reprehensible custom the result would be startling. The habit is not born of true generosity, but of profligacy, and it has mainly arisen from the tendency to wastefulness that seems almost a part of American institutions.

We have received a rather singular communication from a reader in the interior of this State. It is in part a dissertation upon the relations of labor and capital and in part a homily to the legislature touching their duties. The author says that "the legislature of West Virginia now in session in the city of Wheeling should frame, in the language of common sense, wisdom and grace, such laws as would give God the glory and every man his rights." He also says that "those law makers are in our opinion, the objects of divine detestation who create laws to tax the innocent people to pay the expenses of parties who go to law in such courts as the County Court of West Virginia." He further says that "the many don't know and don't care what they do at the polls, and there is a great deal of harm in their voting. It is by them that we are today under the present constitution—the lawyers and officers constituted; and by them the Capital of the State was voted to Charleston and our county seat voted from Princeton to Grafton."

We have not the space for the whole of the unique communication of our correspondent, but what we have given will do for samples. The legislature should lay its utterances to heart.

The School Book Discussion.

This is the twenty-third day of the legislative session, and but twenty-two more days remain. Thus far the progress towards the accomplishment of the expected legislation of the session has not been striking by any means, and there are serious apprehensions that a great deal of valuable time is being spent by very little purpose. The school law is the great consumer of time. Every man has an idea of his own about that subject, and it differs from everybody else's idea. It seems probable that the bill now under discussion in the House will go to the Senate, and be there discussed and finally killed. And then the "denominational grind" will, we presume, recommence in the House over somebody else's bill. We have a law in force in regard to text books that is not a law in regard to the price of the books but a law in regard to the way in which they are to be distributed, and really the only one about which the public feel any concern. One text book may differ from another in glory, but the influence of any of them is quite sufficient if it was only let into the school houses at a reasonable price. The lowest wholesale price of any and all of the publishers is very easily ascertained, and when ascertained it could be appended to the present law as an amendment, and, in substance, that the present series, or any other series, should be used for five years provided it is furnished to dealers at a price not exceeding said lowest price, and provided that said price

shall be printed on the backs of the books, in plain letters, so that every buyer of a book in West Virginia could see at a glance the price at which the dealer got the book from the publisher, and thus protect himself against extortion. Such an enactment would do away with boards of selection of any kind, and give the legislature control of the question. It is the simplest method in its workings, and obviates all difficulties about who shall supply and distribute the school books of the State. They will be sold by every body, as now, but under a wholesome check as to price.

It is no wonder that Louisiana defaulted her January interest, when New Orleans is assessed at \$100,000,000 and all the rest of the State at \$55,000,000. The undervaluation of the parish plantations is simply shameful. United States Senator Kellogg and his brother-in-law, for instance, own 3,300 acres of the best land in the State, and their crops sell for \$30,000 or \$40,000 a year, but their taxes are less than \$250. President Cyrus Bussey, of the New Orleans Chamber of Commerce, has an interest in 1,900 acres near by, which are only taxed some \$200. No capital stock of corporations was returned for taxation outside of New Orleans last year. The New Orleans Times, which is anxious to preserve the State's credit, admits that this assessment is a fraud and urges that the present system be revised. It is charged, however, that the bourns have determined to repudiate part of the \$12,000,000 debt, and that the Constitutional Convention is to effect that purpose. The sentiment in favor of repudiation is reported to be growing in the State, particularly in the northern parishes. Notwithstanding all this, it is hoped that the Times takes a bold stand for Louisiana's financial honor, and insists that the State does not intend to add repudiation to her other miseries.

Senator Johnson's Railroad Bill.

We presume that Senator Johnson has really no expectation, and for that matter no desire, that the legislature will adopt his Baltimore & Ohio Railroad bill, and for the very sufficient reason that it is not only impracticable but destructive of the end proposed—a radical reduction of tolls on the road. It will be remembered that in Mr. Johnson's minority or Senate report, he virtually conceded that the rate of tolls that he now proposes might "not be equitable or just," but said he, "it is the law as we find it expressed in the charter of the company." In other words, as Mr. Johnson once said, "it is so denominated in the bond."

Now, that is the question, whether or not it is so denominated in the bond, and the one which the railroad company will of course be driven to test in the courts. Perhaps the courts will read Mr. Johnson's minority report, and will take account of the following remark therein: "We are not instructed to enquire what the law ought to be. If we were, we would probably recommend that the law of March 11, 1837, and the Act of March 6, 1847, be so amended as to allow the company to charge a much higher rate for transportation than the law permits them to charge."

This language would certainly seem to indicate that Mr. Johnson regarded the interpretation put upon the law as it stands by his report as a harsh necessity, and one that he would wish to see modified by the Legislature. This is a fair inference from the language used. And yet the bill that Mr. Johnson has now proposed and submitted to the Senate provides that the tolls from Chicago to Baltimore shall be divided at the Ohio river ratably between the line west of the river and the main stem of the road, and then, after thus ascertaining the amount to be charged between the river and Baltimore, that amount, whatever it may be, shall be the standard by which freight shall be charged to every point along the line, according to the mileage. That is to say, if wheat is carried from Chicago to Baltimore for 18 cents per hundred, then that rate shall be divided at the Ohio river by allowing 9 cents per hundred from the river to Baltimore, and only a pro rata of 9 cents (according to the mileage) to any point between the river and Baltimore.

This standard of tolls was shown to be ridiculous by the majority report. The following illustration in that report is what the logicians call the *reductio ad absurdum*:

"The freight on grain from Chicago to Baltimore we understand to be \$40 per car of 20,000 pounds. The distance being 338 miles makes \$1.70 per one hundred miles, or four and three-quarters cents per mile. This section, so construed, would compel the company to transport a car load of grain between stations five miles apart for 23 cents, and require them to load, transport and deliver 2,000 pounds a like distance for 23 cents, and for loading, transporting and delivering five hundred pounds would be entitled to receive a little more than one-half cent."

We have no idea that the Legislature will enact any such bill as Mr. Johnson's. We call public attention to it to show that precious time is being fooled away in this Legislature on a subject in which the people have a deep interest. Why is such a bill introduced? Is it for buncombe? We must say that it is quite that way very decidedly. The Baltimore & Ohio Company will law the State of West Virginia until downsway before they will accept such an interpretation of their charter. Why drive them into the Courts when they profess to be ready to compromise on a fair basis? Now that there is at least a prospect of getting important concessions why fool away the time in considering a bill that its author virtually published to the world as impracticable and unjust.

The Ashland Strike Continues.

CINCINNATI, January 29.—The outlook at the Ashland, Ky., iron works and furnace mills still continues. A large body of miners are on guard at the iron works to prevent those who wish to resume work from doing so. Over a thousand employees are thus thrown out of employment, causing considerable distress among them, many families being in need of the necessities of life, the husband and father being out of work through the last strike, which has existed for the past six months.

Recently Ill.

CINCINNATI, January 29.—O. C. Sands, business manager of the Cincinnati Times, is dangerously ill. It is thought that he may die before morning.

Accident to Steamer Hudson.

CINCINNATI, January 29.—The Hudson, which started last evening for Wheeling, broke her T. She was repaired and proceeded to-day.

Dropped Dead.

New York, January 29.—Rev. Alphonso P. Peitler, aged 43 years, dropped dead while performing a marriage ceremony at his church, St. Francis Xavier.

A City Charter Repealed.

NASHVILLE, January 29.—The Legislature finally passed the bill to-day repealing the charter of Memphis and remanding it to the territory of Tennessee, and providing for its local government as taxing districts.

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